

Tear-Water Tea

Written and illustrated by Arnold Lobel



Owl took the kettle out of the cupboard. "Tonight I will make tear-water tea," he said. He put the kettle on his lap. "Now," said Owl, "I will begin."



Owl sat very still. He began to think of things that were sad.

"Chairs with broken legs," said Owl. His eyes began to water.

"Songs that cannot be sung," said Owl, "because the words have been forgotten." Owl began to cry. A large tear rolled down and dropped into the kettle.

"Spoons that have fallen behind the stove and are never seen again," said Owl. More tears dropped down into the kettle.



"Books that cannot be read," said Owl, "because some of the pages have been torn out."

"Clocks that have stopped," said Owl, "with no one near to wind them up."



Owl was crying. Many large tears dropped into the kettle. "Mornings nobody saw because everybody was sleeping," sobbed Owl.



"Mashed potatoes left on a plate," he cried, "because no one wanted to eat them."

And pencils that are too short to use."



Owl thought about many other sad things. He cried and cried. Soon the kettle was all filled up with tears.



"There," said Owl.
"That does it!" Owl
stopped crying. He put
the kettle on the stove
to boil for tea.



Owl felt happy
as he filled his cup.
"It tastes a little
bit salty," he said,
"but tear-water tea is
always very good."